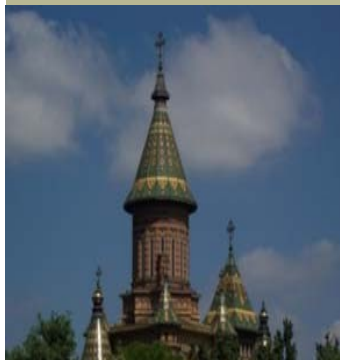




American Citizen Services eNewsletter

April 2012

PREPARE FOR THE UNEXPECTED



One of the most frightening and destructive phenomena of nature is a severe earthquake and its terrible aftereffects. An earthquake is the sudden, rapid shaking of the earth, caused by the breaking and shifting of subterranean rock as it releases strain that has accumulated over a long time.



For hundreds of millions of years, the forces of plate tectonics have shaped the earth, as the huge plates that form the earth's surface slowly move over, under and past each other. Sometimes, the movement is gradual. At other times, the plates are locked together, unable to release accumulated energy. When the accumulated energy grows strong enough, the plates break free. If the earthquake occurs in a populated area, it may cause many deaths and injuries and extensive property damage.

The following are things you can do to protect yourself, your family and your property in the event of an earthquake.

To begin preparing, you should put together an emergency kit and make a family communications plan.

- Fasten shelves securely to walls.
- Place large or heavy objects on lower shelves.
- Store breakable items such as bottled foods, glass, and china in low, closed cabinets with latches.

All non-emergency ACS services (renewal of U.S. passports, Consular Reports of Birth Abroad, notariats, etc.) are provided by appointment **ONLY**.

Please follow [this link](#) to make an appointment with our staff.

AMERICAN CITIZEN SERVICES

Address: 4-6 Dr. Liviu Librescu Blvd.

E-mail: acsbucharest@state.gov

Tel: +40-21-270 6000

Fax: +40-21-200-3578

In the event of an emergency involving an American citizen, please, call +40-21-200-3433

For information about public hours, please visit <http://romania.usembassy.gov/acs/index.html>.



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- Fasten heavy items such as pictures and mirrors securely to walls and away from beds, couches and anywhere people sit.
- Brace overhead light fixtures and top heavy objects.
- Repair defective electrical wiring and leaky gas connections. These are potential fire risks. Get appropriate professional help. Do not work with gas or electrical lines yourself.
- Install flexible pipe fittings to avoid gas or water leaks. Flexible fittings are more resistant to breakage.
- Secure your water heater, refrigerator, furnace and gas appliances by strapping them to the wall studs and bolting to the floor. If recommended by your gas company, have an automatic gas shut-off valve installed that is triggered by strong vibrations.
- Repair any deep cracks in ceilings or foundations. Get expert advice if there are signs of structural defects.
- Be sure the residence is firmly anchored to its foundation.
- Store weed killers, pesticides, and flammable products securely in closed cabinets with latches and on bottom shelves.
- Locate safe spots in each room under a sturdy table or against an inside wall. Reinforce this information by moving to these places during each drill.
- Hold earthquake drills with your family members: *Drop, cover and hold on.*

Prepare yourself and your family for a disaster by making an emergency plan.

Download the **Family Emergency Plan (FEP)** (PDF - 3 Mb), print the pages and fill them in offline.

Your emergency planning should also address the **care of pets, aiding family members with access and functional needs and safely shutting off utilities.**

You may also want to inquire about emergency plans at work, daycare and school. If no plans exist, consider volunteering to help create one. Read more about **school** and **workplace plans.**

Once you've collected this important information, gather your family members and discuss the information to put in the plan. Practice your plan at least twice a year and update it according to any issues that arise.



Read more about disaster preparedness at **Ready. Prepare. Plan. Stay Informed** website at <http://www.ready.gov/earthquakes>.



*Planning to travel in Romania or outside?
Please visit www.travel.state.gov to learn
about travel warnings, travel alerts, coun-
try specific information, and more!*

This summer, London will host the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games. American visitors will join millions of others from around the world, descending on London in a celebration of sport. The 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games will bring together athletes from 205 countries competing in 26 different sports. Look up ["Before you go" tips](#), if you're planning a trip.

"You may not know it yet but, if you are over age 65, you have been given specific permission and encouragement to enjoy yourself especially this month. May is "Older Americans Month" and the theme this year is "Never Too Old To Play!"

Read [full story](#).

Help for American Victims of Crime Overseas

If you have become a victim of crime while living or traveling overseas, we can help.

- **Contact the nearest U.S. Embassy or Consulate:**

Consular officers are available for emergency assistance 24 hours/day, 7 days/week.

Contact information for U.S. Embassies and Consulates overseas can be found at

<http://www.usembassy.gov/>. To contact the Department of State in the U.S. call **1-888-407-4747** during business hours, and **202-647-5225** after hours.

- **Contact the local police to report the incident and get immediate help. Request a copy of the police report.**

Visit http://www.travel.state.gov/travel/tips/emergencies/emergencies_1748.html for more information on



WE REMIND YOU...

... about your personal computer security! The following article was provided by the Embassy's Information Management Officer.

"For computer users, a few mouse clicks could mean the difference between staying online and losing Internet connections this summer...

The FBI is encouraging users to visit a website run by its security partner, <http://www.dcwg.org>, that will inform them whether they're infected and explain how to fix the problem. After July 9, infected users won't be able to connect to the Internet..."

To read full article go to <http://news.yahoo.com/hundreds-thousands-may-lose-internet-july-181324701--finance.html>

To check and clean computers: <http://www.dcwg.org>.

... that before you leave for your trip abroad, you might want to check with CBP about the items you plan to bring back to the United States to be sure they're not prohibited or restricted. Prohibited means the item is forbidden by law to enter the United States. Examples of prohibited items are dangerous toys, cars that don't protect their occupants in a crash, bush meat, or illegal substances like absinthe and Rohypnol. Restricted means that special licenses or permits are required from a federal agency before the item is allowed to enter the United States. Examples of restricted items include firearms, certain fruits and vegetables, animal products, and some animals.

Read more about Prohibited and Restricted Items at http://www.cbp.gov/xp/cgov/travel/vacation/kbyg/prohibited_restricted.xml.

... that Travel Warnings are issued when long-term, protracted conditions that make a country dangerous or unstable lead the State Department to recommend that Americans avoid or consider the risk of travel to that country. A Travel Warning is also issued when the U.S. Government's ability to assist American citizens is constrained due to the closure of an embassy or consulate or because of a drawdown of its staff. Here is a list of current travel warnings.

... that Travel Alerts are issued to disseminate information about short-term conditions, either transnational or within a particular country, that pose significant risks to the security of U.S. citizens. Natural disasters, terrorist attacks, coups, anniversaries of terrorist events, election-related demonstrations or violence, and high-profile events such as international conferences or regional sports events are examples of conditions that might generate a Travel Alert. Here is a list of current travel alerts



Smart
Traveler
Enrollment
Program

We continue to encourage all U.S. citizens to *register their trips and residence abroad* to facilitate our communications with them in the event of an emergency. If you have any questions about the *Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP)*, please, email us at ACSBcharest@state.gov.

The Embassy will be closed on May 28, June 4, July 4, August 15, September 3, October 8, November 12, November 22, December 25 and December 26 in observance of U.S. and Romanian official holidays and for administrative reasons.



Have you registered to vote and/or request absentee ballots in advance? Please register on the Federal Voting Assistance Program (FVAP) website <http://www.fvap.gov/>.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:

Can I renew my passport by mail?

Yes, you can ***IF you qualify***. To determine whether you qualify for mail-in passport renewal or not, please, visit [our website](#).

If you qualify to renew your passport by mail, please submit the following documentation:

- [Form DS-82](#) - follow the instructions on the form and make sure that all fields are completed, as required.
- Two identical passport sized (5cm x 5cm) photos. See our [Photo requirements](#).
- Your most recent U.S. passport.
- *If you name has changed since the last passport was issued, include proof of name change (original or certified marriage certificate, divorce decree or court Order).*
- Your application fee payment. **Please refer to [Fees and Forms of Payment](#) to verify the fee.**

All payments must be made by Postal Money Order (*Mandat Postal*), from any Romanian Post Office in the country. The Money Order **in RON** must be addressed as follows: **Daniela Ionescu, Consular Section Cashier, American Embassy, Blvd. Liviu Librescu nr. 4-6, Bucharest 015118**. Please call the cashier at the beginning of the week at tel: 021-270-6000, to inquire about the RON equivalent of the passport fee.

Please remember that we **CANNOT** accept credit cards and/or cash through mail. Also, we **DO NOT** accept personal checks as means of payment.

If you have any questions or require additional clarification of this process, please, email us at ACSBucharest@state.gov.

